

Blazing Issues

Volume No. III Issue No. 2

Winter 1993

Official Publication of the Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards Commission

QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING

The Quarterly Commission Meeting of the Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards Commission was held Wednesday, January 20, 1993, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

The Executive Director reported on his attendance at a meeting of the Alabama Emergency Response Commission Training Committee. At this meeting, the committee recommended that funds which have been made available from the Department of Transportation for training, be used for state-wide training. This recommendation was approved by the Alabama Emergency Response Commission.

Commission members approved changing the time for Commission meetings to begin from 10:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

The next regular quarterly meeting of the Commission will be held in Montgomery, Alabama on April 21, 1993.

PART-TIME TECHNICAL ASSISTANT ADDED TO STAFF

Mr. James LeVert has been employed as a part-time Technical Assistant with the Fire College. He will be teaching resident courses and assisting in all areas of the Drill Field. James is a Tuscaloosa Firefighter/Paramedic and has served as an Adjunct Instructor for the Fire College for a number of years. He is married and has a little girl.

For more information on training at your department, night or weekends, contact your regional coordinator.

Fire Chiefs' Executive Development Program



The Annual Fire Chiefs' Executive Development Conference was held January 26-29, 1993 at the Ramada Inn in Tuscaloosa. Sixty-five Fire Chiefs and other fire personnel were in attendance. Program participants included: Jerry Laughlin-NFPA 1500; Scott Schein-Bloodborne Pathogens; Reita Hall-Mann-Americans with Disability Act; Joseph Lynch-ISO; and Guy Booten-Physical Fitness in the Fire Service.

Those in attendance were:

Ed Allen-Tuscaloosa Air Crash
David R. Anderson-Eufaula Fire Department
Dempsey Barefield-Ozark Fire Department
James R. Barkley-Huntsville Fire Department
Ed Berger-Mobile Fire Department
W. R. Bevis-Florence Fire Department
Douglas J. Blair-Childersburg Fire Department
George T. Blakemore-Gulf Shores Fire/Rescue
Ronnie Blankenship-Auburn Fire Department
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Darryl F. Cothren-Huntsville Fire Department
Wilson Craig-City of Athens
Thomas Davis-Tuscaloosa Fire Department
Solomon Denard-Phenix City Fire Department
Virgil Dobbs-Newton Vol. Fire Department
A. Wess Etheridge-Daleville Fire Department
Eddie Everette-Monroeville Fire Department
Elbert Jackson Finley-Anniston Fire Department
Robert L. Fulmer-Fayette Fire Department
Mike Fuqua-Demopolis Fire Department
Greg Garner-Madison Fire Department
Wayne Grier-Montgomery Fire Department
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Frank M. Hill-Tampa Fire Department
Hubert Hughes-Andalusia Dept. of Public Safety
Ronnie Jackson-Poarch Vol. Fire Department
Timothy M. Kant-Fairhope Vol. Fire Department
C. B. Kendrick-Bessemer Fire Department
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Charles P. Wallace-Madison Fire Department
Gary W. Waters-Pelham Fire Department
Anthony K. Wilkerson-LaFayette Fire Dept.
James W. Wyatt-Cahaba Height Fire District

CURRICULUM COORDINATOR EMPLOYED

Mr. Jerry Laughlin has been employed as a Curriculum Coordinator. Jerry comes to the Fire College with a vast range of experience and knowledge in the area of curriculum development as well as NFPA standards. He was employed with the National Fire Protection Association first as an editor of the Fire Protection Handbook and later as Executive Editor of Fire Command Magazine. He has also worked with IFSTA and served as Editor of Fire Engineering Magazine in New York. Jerry is in the process of updating the Firefighter I curriculum to include the revised 1992 edition of NFPA 1001.

Jerry was a firefighter in the Birmingham Fire Department and authored several books including "Last Alarm" and "Bama Burning". He is married and has two children and two grandchildren.



Blazing Issues

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ALABAMA FIRE COLLEGE and PERSONNEL STANDARDS COMMISSION**Commission Members**R. Wayne Grier, Chairman
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What the ADA is and is not—



Nearly a year after the Americans with Disabilities Act became effective for most fire departments, its major beneficiary can now be identified - the U. S. Postal Service. Almost every working day, the typical chief can expect one or two letters offering books, audiovisuals, training programs or expert advice on how to comply with ADA and avoid a "flood of lawsuits".

There's no question that ADA may require significant changes in the way chiefs deal with personnel, but several myths have already sprung up around ADA. Here are some of them, along with the facts.

MYTH: "ADA requires us to hire disabled people."

FACT: ADA requires that disabled people be considered for jobs they can do with or without "reasonable accommodation". More on this concept later.

MYTH: "ADA doesn't apply to my department because we have fewer than 15 firefighters."

FACT: ADA's minimum-employee requirements apply only to private employers. All state- and local-government employers are expected to comply with ADA's personnel provisions.

MYTH: "If one of my present employees becomes disabled, I'll have to create a permanent light-duty job for him or her."

FACT: ADA doesn't require creation of any jobs. If a firefighter becomes disabled and can no longer fight fire, ADA is intended to give that individual an equal opportunity for consideration for a nonfirefighting job vacancy, provided the disabled firefighter can do the new work with or without reasonable accommodation.

When chief officers try to gauge ADA's effect on their department, they start by visualizing a person with a specific disability, and then try to figure out how they would test, train, and employ that person. That's the wrong approach.

In assessing ADA's effect on your department, start by answering two questions about the job: What are its essential components, and what are its "safety" components?

The essential components of the firefighter's job include the abilities to advance hose lines, work in climate extremes, move unconscious people out of danger areas and work while wearing SCBA and protective clothing.

ADA does not define "essential functions" on a job-by-job basis, but if eliminating a function would fundamentally change a job, ADA considers that ability an essential function. Rescuing someone in danger is essential; cooking an edible fire house meal is not.

Since ADA's principle aim is to prohibit discrimination against disabled people qualified to do a job with or without reasonable accommodation, your assessment enables you to determine who is qualified to be a firefighter without reasonable accommodation. Your entry-level selection system brings you more than halfway to your goal of ADA compliance.

When you've analyzed the job, you can turn to an analysis of disability, and this is where reasonable accommodation becomes an issue.

Critics and ADA argue that failure to specifically define this key concept is one of the act's major flaws. But ADA offers some guidelines.

How much does accommodation of a disability cost? Would accommodation of someone's disability interfere with others carrying out the same job? Would accommodation actually rewrite the list of job's essential functions?

Under ADA, accommodations that cost too much, interfere with essential parts of a job or fundamentally change the job are not "reasonable." But ADA does place the responsibility for providing reasonable accommodation on the employer.

Extreme nearsightedness, for example, is a disability. Could an otherwise qualified person who was nearsighted be reasonably accommodated? The answer is probably yes.

Employers are not required to furnish personal items (such as eyeglasses) for qualified disabled people, but an employer could furnish an eyeglass-lens holder designed to fit inside an SCBA mask. Since such holders typically cost less than \$50.00, a reasonable observer would probably conclude that they represent a

reasonable accommodation that the employer would be expected to furnish.

Dyslexia, which interferes with a person's ability to read, is also a disability. If a dyslexic person with a severe reading problem were to apply for a firefighter's job, would his or her request for a "reader," someone to read written materials aloud, constitute reasonable accommodation? The answer is probably no.

If that dyslexic firefighter were at a haz mat incident and had to read an MSDS while wearing SCBA, the reader might not only get in the way, but might be in direct danger.

The ability to assess real and potential reasonable-accommodation issues completes the basic preparation a chief fire officer will need to address everyday employment issues raised by ADA.

Focusing an ADA analysis on the job also saves time. This assessment method will also serve in determining whether a disabled firefighter is "disabled" for purposes of ADA protection, and what other work he or she may be able to do.

A good analysis is not a substitute for a working knowledge of ADA rules. But keeping in mind ADA's intent, eliminating discrimination against qualified people with disabilities who can do a job with or without reasonable accommodation, makes understanding the rules easier. Here are some examples:

► You can't ask an applicant if he or she suffers from a disability, has filed workers' compensation claims in the past or similar questions. Under ADA, this would or could interfere with a simple and fair assessment of whether the applicant could do the job, so these questions are discriminatory. In effect, ADA asks only one question: Can the applicant do the job?

► You can't ask a candidate to go through a full medical examination until you're ready to offer the job on the condition that he or she successfully completes that medical exam. Using ADA reasoning, starting with a medical examination would tend to discriminate against disabled people who might be able to do a job. Note that physical-ability tests and drug tests are not medical examinations, and so are not effected by ADA.

► You can't have two physical-ability tests (one for the apparently disabled and one for everyone else) or two types of medical examinations. Any application or testing requirement must apply to all candidates.

► Your job requirements must be real requirements, not just paper ones, and must apply to everyone who holds that job. If you have a firefighter with a disability who is still performing as a firefighter, you can't refuse to consider an applicant with the same disability.

It is very important to note that ADA doesn't require you to hire a qualified person with a disability. You must, however, give that person fair consideration, and if you turn him or her down because of the disability, you are violating ADA.

Can individuals with disabilities perform a job's essential functions, with or without reasonable accommodation, without posing a direct threat to their own safety, or the safety of others? If the answer is yes, ADA requires that they be considered for employment. There's more to ADA than that, but not as much as those cards and letters would have you believe.●

Reprinted from Fire Chief, December 1992.

-COMING- 57TH ANNUAL FIRE COLLEGE WEEK



The 57th Annual Fire College Week is scheduled for April 22-25, 1993.

Three one-day courses and seven two-day courses will be offered. The one-day courses are: Infection Control; Ladders; and LP and Flammable Gas. The two-day courses are: Basic Rope Rescue; Fire/Arson Detection; ISO; NFA-Incident Command System; Hazardous Materials Awareness/Operational; 12-Hour S.C.B.A.; and NFA-Volunteer Fire Service Management.

Students may attend all four days or the weekend only.

There is no registration fee for Fire College Week Courses. However, students must register. Students must be a minimum of 19 years of age on the first day of class. Walk-ins will not be

accepted and class assignment is final. Classes cannot be changed after assignments are made.

Students will be responsible for their own room and meals. Students should bring turn-out gear and S.C.B.A. Certificates of Attendance will be issued.

"Time to make your National Fire Academy State Weekend Trip Reservations"



The Annual Alabama State Weekend Program at the National Fire Academy is scheduled for July 15-19, 1993. The registration fee is \$100.00 and should be received by the Fire College no later than June 25, 1993. Registration fee includes transportation costs and meals while at the National Fire Academy. Rooms, classes and class materials as well as instructors are all provided by the Fire Academy. Rooms are dormitory style with linens furnished.

Courses to be taught will be Infection Control for Emergency Response Personnel; The Supervisor's Role and Responsibilities; Initial Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents: Basic Concepts, Leadership I; and Managing Company Tactical Operations: Preparation. Students should indicate their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice on the registration form.

Travel will be by bus and it will leave the Fire College at 8:00 p.m. and from Jefferson State Junior College in Birmingham at 9:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 15th and arrive in Emmitsburg, Maryland at the National Fire Academy at approximately 3:45 p.m. on Friday, July 16th.

Those persons wishing to provide their own transportation to the Fire Academy may do so and pay a registration fee of \$50.00.

Cancellations will be accepted until June 25, 1993 with 100% refund. No refunds will be made after June 25th.

For additional information on the Alabama Weekend Program at the National Fire Academy, contact Jimmy Conner, Chief of Training at the Alabama Fire College at (205) 759-1508.



DOT STIPEND SCHOOLS BEING OFFERED

Funds have been made available from the Department of Transportation through the Alabama Emergency Response Commission for training in the area of Hazardous Materials. These funds will be used for 10 resident stipend courses and 125 field courses. The resident courses and dates are:

CAMEO CLASSES

July 26-30, 1993
August 9-13, 1993
August 23-27, 1993

HAZ MAT TECHNICIAN CLASSES

April 5-9, 1993
May 3-7, 1993
June 28-July 2, 1993

FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY

May 22-23, 1993 (weekend)
May 29-30, 1993 (weekend)
July 21-22, 1993
August 24-25, 1993

These stipend courses will include registration fee, room and meals. All registrations for these courses will be handled by the Regional Coordinators.

Also included in the DOT funding will be the following field courses: 40 Hazardous Materials Awareness/Operational 12-Hour Courses, 70 Hazardous Materials Awareness/Operational Refresher 4-Hour Courses, and 15 ICS 12-Hour Courses. The registration fee will be stipend and these should be scheduled through the Regional Coordinators.

If you have questions concerning either the resident stipend or field stipend courses above, please contact your regional coordinator.

HELP US to SERVE You

If you are interested in attending a class, be sure to check the class registration deadline and get your registration in on time!

CERTIFICATION

The persons listed below have been certified by the Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards Commission during the 4th quarter of the 1991-92 year.

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Kevin S. Daniels	Montgomery
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Dennis Dwight Graves	Trussville
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Central	Central
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Meridianville	
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Keel Mountain	
Keel Mountain	
Green Mountain	
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Green Mountain	
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Moore's Mill	
Moore's Mill	
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Wicksburg	
Wicksburg	
Wicksburg	
Wicksburg	
Geneva	
Geneva	
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Double Springs	
Black Pond	
Black Pond	
Black Pond	
Houston	
Houston	
Houston	
Lynn	
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Michael C. Chaney	Hueytown
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C. Dale Sellers	Hueytown
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Secretary	Sandra Glass 9787 County Road 813 Cullman, AL 35055
Treasurer	Vick Compton Route 1, Box 384 Union Grove, AL 35175

Alabama Firefighters Association

President	Joe Parker 131 Main Street Trussville, AL 35173
1st Vice-President	Tammy Stewart 6017 Trailwood Drive Huntsville, AL 35811
Secretary	Brian Cleveland 67 Cedar Grove Maylene, AL 35114
Treasurer	David Cohen 131 Main Street Trussville, AL 35173

Alabama Fire College
GENERAL REGISTRATION FORM

Please type or print. One registrant per form. Duplicate form for additional copies.

Part I-Personal Information

1. NAME (As you would like it to appear on your certificate)

First	Middle	Last	Title	Social Security No.
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2. DEPARTMENT/COMPANY REPRESENTING

Name of Dept./Company	Street Address	City, State, Zip	Dept. Phone #
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3. HOME ADDRESS

Address	City, State, Zip	Home Phone #
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4. DATE OF BIRTH _____ 5. SEX: Male Female

6. STATUS OF APPLICANT (Please Check)

Career Volunteer Industry State Federal

Part II-Course Registration

7. Enter NAME, COURSE NUMBER and DATE of course for which you are registering. Deadline for registration is two weeks prior to the opening day of the class.

<u>COURSE NUMBER</u> and <u>FULL</u> Name of Course	Date of Course
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8. When this course has a pre-requisite, please list the title of the course and date and place you attended the class.

Title of Course and Location of Class	Date Attended
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9. Course fee amount \$ _____ enclosed. Fee/purchase order number MUST be enclosed with this registration form.

Purchase order number _____

Make check payable to the Alabama Fire College. Fee is refundable if notice of cancellation is received five working days prior to the opening of class.

10. Mail check and completed application to:

ALABAMA FIRE COLLEGE
2015 McFarland Boulevard, East
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35405

Phone: (205) 759-1508

FAX Number: (205) 345-4945

**Employee
SPOTLIGHT**

Steve McInnis

Steve joined the Fire College Staff in March, 1992, as the Fire College Bookstore Manager.

Steve oversees the day-to-day operations of the Bookstore and develops marketing and sales plans for future growth.

In 1983, he received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Marketing Management from the University of Alabama.

Steve lived in Louisiana and North Carolina before returning home in 1991. He enjoys all sports, especially those involving the Alabama Crimson Tide. He also enjoys spending time with Jane Smithson and her dog, Biff. Steve attends First Baptist Church of Tuscaloosa.

**1992-93
ALABAMA
FIRE COLLEGE
COURSE
CATALOG**

The 1992-93 Fire College Course Catalog is being published and will be mailed to all fire departments very soon. The Course Catalog contains all Field Courses available, which can be obtained through your Regional Coordinators.

The 1992-93 Resident Courses are scheduled and a calendar is included in the Catalog. For information on Resident Courses, contact Jimmy Conner, Chief of Training. For information on Industrial Training, which is also listed in the Catalog, contact Glen Jacobson, Industrial Coordinator.

We have endeavored to incorporate into the Catalog all necessary information pertaining to resident and field courses. However, as new courses are added during the year, brochures will be mailed. Registration forms are included in the Catalog and should be duplicated for use during the year.

**APRIL 1993-SEPTEMBER 1993
FIRE COLLEGE SCHEDULE**

RESIDENT COURSES

Hazardous Materials I	April 5-9, 1993
I.S.O. Grading Process	April 5-9, 1993
Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (S.C.B.A.)	April 12-16, 1993
C.E.U. Weekend for EMT I	April 17-18, 1993
57th Annual Fire College Week	April 21-25, 1993
Fire Instructor II	April 26-30, 1993
Hazardous Materials I-Technician Level	May 3-7, 1993
N.F.A. Managing Company Tact. Operations-Decisionmaking	May 15-16, 1993
Vehicular Extrication	May 15-16, 1993
Minimum Standards School (Beginning)	May 17, 1993
Firefighter Health and Safety	May 22-23, 1993
Hazardous Materials II-Specialist Level	May 24-28, 1993
Firefighter Health and Safety	May 29-30, 1993
Basic Hydraulics	June 5-6, 1993
High Angle Rope Rescue	June 14-18, 1993
Confined Space Rescue	June 21-25, 1993
Hazardous Materials I-Technician Level	June 28-July 2, 1993
National Fire Academy State Weekend	July 15-19, 1993
Firefighter Health and Safety	July 21-22, 1993
CAMEO Program	July 26-30, 1993
Fire Instructor	August 2-6, 1993
Fire Apparatus Operator	August 9-15, 1993
CAMEO Program	August 9-13, 1993
Trench Rescue	August 16-20, 1993
Basic Hydraulics	August 21-22, 1993
CAMEO Program	August 23-27, 1993
Firefighter Health and Safety	August 24-25, 1993
Rural Water Supply	September 18-19, 1993
Fire Service Hydraulics	September 20-24, 1993

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

Industrial S.C.B.A.	April 5-6, 1993
Industrial Tactics & Strategy	April 19-20, 1993
Fire Brigade I	May 11-13, 1993
Fire Brigade II	June 2-4, 1993
Fire Brigade Organization and Management	July 26-28, 1993
Fire Brigade Instructor	August 2-6, 1993

Use the registration form on the reverse side.

ALABAMA FIRE COLLEGE and
PERSONNEL STANDARDS COMMISSION
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Shelton State Community College
2015 McFarland Boulevard, East
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35405

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SHELTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PRESIDENT TOM UMPHREY
202 SKYLAND BLVD.
TUSCALOOSA AL 35405